

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00

PM-03 INR-07 L-02 ACDA-05 NSAE-00 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01

SP-02 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 MC-02 EB-07 SS-15 NSC-05 /065 W

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FM USMISSION NATO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9993

SECDEFW WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO USCINCEUR

USNMR SHAPE

USLOSACLANT

CINCLANT

USDOCOSOUTH

AMEMBASSY LONDON

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 1 OF 2 USNATO 0680

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, NATO, UK

SUBJECT: UK DEFENSE REVIEW; DRAFT TEXT OF DPC LETTER TO UK

GOVERNMENT

REF: A. STATE 25780 EXDIS

B. STATE 26620 EXDIS

C. USNATO 0657

D. USNATO 0668

TEXT OF PO/75/10: DRAFT LETTER FROM SECRETARY GENERAL TO MR. ROY MASO, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENSE, UNITED KINGDOM, FOLLOWS.

DPC WILL MEET TO CONSIDER TEXT FEBRUARY 10. MISSION COMMENT:

TEXT ADEQUATELY COVERS POINTS OF REFS A AND B, WHICH AMBASSADOR BRUCE MADE AT FEBRUARY 6 DPC (REF C). MISSION RECOMMENDS WASHING- APPROVAL, AND WILL ASSUME SAME UNLESS WASHINGTON INSTRUCTS OTHERWISE BY 1500 BRUSSELS TIME FEBRUARY 10 BEGIN TEXT:

CONCURRENTLY WITH YOUR SPEECH IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS
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ON 3RD DECEMBER, 1974 SIR EDWARD PECK AND FIELD MARSHAL SIR MICHAEL CARVER INITIATED THE PROCESS OF CONSULTATION WITH THE ALLIANCE HERE IN BRUSSELS ON THE OUTCOME OF THE BRITISH DEFENCE REVIEW. LAST WEEK, AND AGAIN TODAY, THE DEFENCE

PLANNING COMMITTEE OF NATO MET TO CONSIDER THE EFFECT ON NATO SECURITY OF THE CHANGES PROPOSED IN THE BRITISH DEFENCE PROGRAMME AS A RESULT OF THIS REVIEW; IN DOING SO THEY HAD THE BENEFIT OF DETAILED ASSESSMENTS BY THE MAJOR NATO COMMANDERS AND BY THE MILITARY COMMITTEE. I HAVE BEEN ASKED TO CONVEY THE VIEWS OF THE DEFENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE TO YOU AND YOUR COLLEAGUES IN THE FOLLOWING TERMS.

2. YOUR ALLIES WISH TO EXPRESS THEIR SYMPATHETIC UNDERSTANDING OF THE ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES, WHICH THE UNITED KINGDOM, IN COMMON WITH OTHER MEMBER COUNTRIES, IS NOW FACING. THEY WISH TO PAY TRIBUTE TO THE IMPORTANT MILITARY CONTRIBUTION WHICH YOUR COUNTRY NOW MAKES, AND HAS TRADITIONALLY MADE, TO THE ALLIANCE. THEY RECOGNISE THAT EVEN IF THIS CONTRIBUTION IS REDUCED ON THE FULL SCALE PROPOSED, THE PROPORTION OF NATIONAL RESOURCES WHICH THE UNITED KINGDOM WILL DEVOTE TO DEFENCE IS STILL LIKELY TO BE COMPARABLE TO THAT OF ITS MAJOR ALLIES. WHILE NOTING THAT A SMALL PROPORTION OF THE REDUCED DEFENCE EFFORT WILL BE IN SUPPORT OF COMMITMENTS OTHER THAN NATO, THEY WELCOME THE ASSURANCE THAT THE ALLIANCE IS REGARDED AS THE LYNCHPIN OF BRITISH SECURITY, AND THAT NATO COMMITMENTS MUST REMAIN THE FIRST CHARGE ON BRITISH RESOURCES.

3. THEY ARE PARTICULARLY GRATEFUL FOR THE DEPTH OF CONSULTATION OFFERED, AND FOR THE ASSURANCE THAT ONLY WHEN THIS CONSULTATION IS COMPLETED WILL FINAL DECISIONS BE ANNOUNCED.

4. NEVERTHELESS IT WILL BE NO SURPRISE TO YOU AND YOUR COLLEAGUES THAT THE REDUCTIONS PROPOSED HAVE CAUSED CONSIDERABLE DISQUIET WITHIN THE ALLIANCE. THEY ARE ON A SCALE CONSIDERABLY LARGER THAN THAT PROPOSED BY ANY OTHER ALLY IN RECENT YEARS; THEY AFFECT IN VARYING DEGREES THE VALIDITY OF NATO DEFENCES IN ALL REGIONS OF THE ALLIANCE, INCLUDING THE MARITIME AREAS; AND THEY INVOLVE ALL THREE MAJOR NATO COMMANDERS. IT IS NOT SURPRISING, THEREFORE, THAT THE NATO MILITARY AUTHORITIES CONCLUDE THAT YOUR PROPOSALS, IF IMPLEMENTED IN FULL, AND IF NOT OFFSET BY COMPENSATING MEASURES (EITHER ON THE PART OF THE

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UK OR OF OTHER COUNTRIES) "WOULD REPRESENT A MAJOR REDUCTION OF NATO'S DEFENCE CAPABILITY IN ACE AND IN THE ACCCHAN/ACLANT AREA, AND WOULD CORRESPONDINGLY WEAKEN NATO'S COVENTIONAL MILITARY CAPABILITY VIS-A-VIS THE WARSAW PACT".

5. THE DFENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE ENDORSES THESE VIEWS. THEY ALSO ENDORSE THE ASSESSMENT OF THE MILITARY COMMITTEE AS A WHOLE, THE TEXT OF WHICH IS ENCLOSED WITH THIS LETTER.

6. THEY WOULD ALSO POINT OUT, HOWEVER, THAT THE PROPOSED REDUCTIONS WOULD ALSO HAVE CONSEQUENCES OF A MORE POLITICAL NATURE. THE STRATEGIC SITUATION IN THE SOUTHERN REGION IS ALREADY A CAUSE FOR SERIOUS CONCERN AS A RESULT OF THE

WEAKENING OF INDIGENOUS FORCES, THE POLITICAL INSTABILITY OF THE AREA AND ITS EXPOSED POSITION VIS-A-VIS SOVIET PENETRATION AND THE POSSIBLE REPERCUSSIONS OF CONFLICTS IN NEIGHBOURING THEATRES. THE WITHDRAWAL OF BRITISH FORCES AND THE ABANDONMENT OF BRITISH MILITARY COMMITMENTS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN WOULD (APART FROM THEIR MILITARY IMPLICATIONS) LEAVE THE UNITED STATES AS THE ONLY NON-MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRY TO MAINTAIN A PERMANENT PRESENCE THERE. THERE IS THE DANGER THAT THESE MOVES WOULD BE REGARDED BY THE SOVIET UNION, AND PERHAPS BY SOME ALLIES AS WELL, AS A WEAKENING OF NATO'S RESOLVE AND PURPOSE IN DEFENDING THE SOUTHERN REGION; THIS CANNOT BUT AFFECT THE SOLIDARITY OF THE ALLIANCE, ON WHICH ITS DETERRENT VALUE AND THEREFORE ITS SECURITY SO LARGEMLY DEPENDS. THE SCALE OF POLITICO-MILITARY DAMAGE WHICH COULD RESULT FROM SUCH WITHDRAWALS SEEMS SCARCELY COMMENSURATE WITH THE SAVINGS EXPECTED.

7. SIMILAR CONSIDERATIONS APPLY IN THE NORTHERN REGION, WHERE THE SECURITY OF NATO TERRITORY HAS TRADITIONALLY DEPENDED HEAVILY ON ALLIED REINFORCEMENT, TO WHICH THE UNITED KINGDOM HAS UNTIL NOW MADE A SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTION, AND IN THE MARITIME COMMANDS.

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9994
SECDEFW WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO USCINCEUR
USNMR SHAPE
USLOSACLANT
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8. THE DEFENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE IS GLAD TO NOTE THAT NO SIGNIFICANT REDUCTIONS APPEAR TO BE ENVISAGED IN THE CENTRAL REGION IN ADVANCE OF AN MBFR AGREEMENT, AND THAT CERTAIN INCREASES IN THE AIR SUPPORT AVAILABLE FOR THIS AREA ARE PLANNED; THEY HOPE, HOWEVER, TO RECEIVE MORE INFORMATION IN DUE

COURSE ON THE REORGANIZATION PROPOSED FOR BAOR. THEY ALSO NOTE WITH SATISFACTION THAT THE UNITED KINGDOM PROPOSES TO MAINTAIN THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ITS PRESENT CONTRIBUTION TO THE STRATEGIC NUCLEAR DETERRENT, AND TO CONTINUE TO PROVIDE TACTICAL NUCLEAR FORCES TO ACE ON THE PRESENT SCALE.

9. NEVERTHELESS THE ALLIES WISH TO EMPHASIZE ONCE AGAIN THAT, IN THE WORDS OF THE OTTAWA DECLARATION, "THEIR COMMON DEFENCE IS ONE AND INDIVISIBLE". NATO IS A SYSTEM OF COLLECTIVE SECURITY; A WEAKENING IN THE DEFENCE OF ONE REGION DIMINISHES THE SECURITY NOT ONLY OF THE COUNTRIES WITHIN THAT REGION, BUT OF THE ALLIANCE A WHOLE. INDEED THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE REDUCTIONS PROPOSED GO WIDER THAN THAT; THEY AFFECT NOT ONLY THE BALANCE OF FORCES WITHIN THE EUROPEAN THEATRE, BUT THE
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WORLD-WIDE STRATEGIC BALANCE BETWEEN EAST AND WEST. IT WAS HOWEVER, WITH THE EUROPEAN THEATRE PARTICULARLY IN MIND THAT AT OTTAWA EACH OF THE FIFTEEN COUNTRIES OF THE ALLIANCE BOUND ITSELF TO MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE THE EFFICIENCY OF ITS FORCES AND TO UNDERTAKE ITS PROPER SHARE OF THE BURDEN OF MAINTAINING THE SECURITY OF ALL. IT WAS ALSO WITH THIS OBJECTIVE THAT AT THE DEFENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE LAST DECEMBER MINISTERS REAFFIRMED THE IMPORTANCE THEY ATTACH TO THE PRINCIPLE THAT NATO FORCES SHOULD NOT BE REDUCED EXCEPT IN THE CONTEXT OF A MBFR-AGREEMENT. IF A MAJOR PARTNER IN THE ALLIANCE NOW APPEARS UNABLE TO HONOUR THESE COMMITMENTS IT WOULD BE UNFORTUNATE, BUT NATURAL, IF OTHERS IN A SIMILAR POSITION MIGHT FIND IT MORE DIFFICULT TO RESIST PRESSURES TO DO LIKEWISE.

10. THESE ARE THE MAJOR POINTS OF CONCERN WHICH THE ALLIES, RECOGNISING THE POSITIVE AS WELL AS THE PROGRESSIVE NATURE OF THE CHANGES PROPOSED, HAVE ASKED ME TO EXPRESS. THEY HAVE ASKED ME ALSO TO CONVEY THEIR VIEWS ON THE SUBJECT OF FURTHER CONSULTATION, BEARING IN MIND THE ASSURANCES WHICH YOU AND YOUR COLLEAGUES HAVE GIVEN BOTH IN PARLIAMENT AND IN NATO THAT FINAL DECISIONS WILL ONLY BE REACHED WHEN CONSULTATION WITH THE ALLIES IS COMPLETE. THERE WOULD SEEM TO BE TWO PHASES IN THIS CONTINUING CONSULTATION:

(A) THE ALLIES TRUST THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WILL GIVE VERY SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO THE VIEWS EXPRESSED ABOVE BEFORE LAYING THEIR PROPOSALS BEFORE PARLIAMENT NEXT MONTH. IN PARTICULAR THEY HOPE THAT BEFORE THIS THERE WILL BE FURTHER CONTACTS WITH NATO ON THE VARIOUS COMPENSATORY MEASURES WHICH HAVE BEEN SUGGESTED, E.G. PERIODIC NAVAL AND AIR VISITS TO THE MEDITERRANEAN, PARTICIPATION IN NAVOCFORMED, REALLOCATION OF RESOURCES FROM OVERHEADS AND SUPPORT UNITS TO COMBAT CAPABILITIES, THE FURTHER EXPLOITATION OF CO-OPERATIVE PROGRAMMES IN NATO, AND THE MORE SPECIFIC COUNTER-PROPOSALS OF THE MAJOR NATO COMMANDERS. THEY WOULD ALSO HOPE FOR

FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE PROPOSED REORGANIZATION OF
BAOR AND THE FUTURE RE-EQUIPMENT AND MODERNIZATION
PROBLEMS IN ALL THREE SERVICES;

(B) CONTINUED CONSULTATION BEYOND THE PUBLICATION OF THE
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WHITE PAPER ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED
CHANGES, USING THE ENTIRETY OF THE NATO MACHINERY
AVAILABLE, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE
POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SECURITY SITUATION AS THEY
ARISE. THEY SUGGEST THAT SOME OF THE REDUCTIONS
PLANNED FOR THE LONGER-TERM MIGHT BE AVOIDED BY SAVING
RESOURCES THROUGH INCREASED CO-OPERATION WITHIN NATO,
E.O. THROUGH RATIONALIZATION, CONSOLIDATION AND
CO-OPERATION, WITHOUT REDUCING THE OVERALL DEFENCE
EFFORT OF NATO.

11. IN BOTH CASES THE ALLIES HOPE THAT THE BRITISH
AUTHORITIES WILL BE ABLE TO GIVE MORE PRECISE INFORMATION ABOUT
THE FINANCIAL EFFECTS OF THE NEW PROGRAMME. IN THIS CONTEXT
THEY URGE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO JUDGE THE SCALE AND NATURE
OF ITS MILITARY CONTRIBUTION TO NATO NOT IN FINANCIAL TERMS
ALONE, BUT IN TERMS OF ITS TOTAL VALUE AND THE VALUE OF ITS
CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS TO ALLIANCE DEFENCE AND DETERRENCE IN
ALL THEATRES.

12. THE DEFENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE LOOKS FORWARD TO
RECEIVING THE UNITED KINGDOM RESPONSE TO THESE VIEWS LATER THIS
MONTH. THERE WILL, OF COURSE, BE A NEED TO CO-ORDINATE THE
PUBLICATION OF THE NATO VIEW WITH THAT OF YOUR WHITE PAPER WHEN
THE TERMS OF BOTH HAVE BEEN FINALIZED.

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